CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 31 MAY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN ON 28 MAY 1998 ANNOUNCING THE CONDUCT OF NUCLEAR TESTS BY PAKISTAN

The Prime Minister of Pakistan made a statement on 28 May 1998 announcing the conduct of nuclear tests by Pakistan. I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the Prime Minister's statement.

I shall be grateful if this statement of the Prime Minister is circulated as an official document of the Conference.

(Signed) Munir Akram
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

GE.98-62015

Statement made by the Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif (28 May, 1998)

Pakistan today successfully conducted five nuclear tests.

2. The results were as expected. There was no release of radio-activity.

3. I congratulate all Pakistani scientists, engineers and technicians for their dedicated team work and expertise in mastering complex and advanced technologies.

4. The entire nation takes justifiable pride in the accomplishments of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. A.Q. Khan Research Laboratories and all affiliated Organizations. They have demonstrated Pakistan's ability to deter aggression.

5. Pakistan has been obliged to exercise the nuclear option due to weaponization of India's nuclear programme.

6. This had led to the collapse of the "existential deterrence" and had radically altered the strategic balance in our region.

7. Immediately after its nuclear tests, India had brazenly raised the demand that "Islamabad should realize the change in the geo-strategic situation in the region" and threatened that "India will deal firmly and strongly with Pakistan".

8. Our security, and peace and stability of the entire region was thus gravely threatened. As a self-respecting national we had no choice left to us.

9. Our hand was forced by the present Indian leadership's reckless actions.

10. After due deliberation and careful review of all options we took the decision to restore the strategic balance. The nation would not have expected anything less from its leadership.

11. For the past three decades Pakistan repeatedly drew attention of the international community to India's incremental steps on the nuclear and ballistic ladder.

12. Our warnings remained unheeded.

13. Despite the continuing deterioration in Pakistan's security environment, we exercised utmost restraint.

14. We pursued in all earnest the goal of non-proliferation in South Asia.

15. Our initiatives to keep South Asia free of nuclear and ballistic weapon systems were spurned.

16. The international response to the Indian nuclear tests did not factor the security situation in our region. While asking us to exercise restraint, powerful voices urged acceptance of the Indian weaponization as a fait-accompli.

17. Pakistan's legitimate security concerns were not addressed, even after the threat of use of nuclear weapons and nuclear blackmail.

18. We could not have remained complacent about threats to our security. We could not have ignored the magnitude of the threat.

19. Under no circumstances would the Pakistani nation compromise on matters pertaining to its life and existence.

20. Our decision to exercise the nuclear option has been taken in the interest of national self-defence. These weapons are to deter aggression, whether nuclear or conventional.

21. Pakistan will continue to support the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, especially in the Conference on Disarmament, bearing in mind the new realities.

22. We are undertaking a re-evaluation of the applicability and relevance of the global non-proliferation regimes to nuclearized South Asia.

23. We are ready to engage in a constructive dialogue with other countries, especially major powers, on ways and means to promoting these goals, in the new circumstances.

24. Pakistan has always acted with utmost restraint and responsibility. We will continue to do so in the future.

25. We are prepared to resume Pakistan-India dialogue to address all outstanding issues including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as peace and security. These should include urgent steps for mutual restraint and equitable measures for nuclear stabilization.

26. Pakistan has already offered a non-aggression pact to India on the basis of a just settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. I would like to reiterate this offer.

27. We have instituted effective command and control structures. We are fully conscious of the need to handle these weapon systems with the highest sense of responsibility.

28. We have not and will not transfer sensitive technologies to other States or entities.

29. At the same time, Pakistan will oppose all unjust embargoes aimed at preventing it from exercising its right to develop various technologies for self-defence or peaceful purposes.

30. I would like to again assure all countries that our nuclear weapon systems are meant only for self-defence and there should be no apprehension or concern in this regard.

31. The Pakistani people are united in their resolve to safeguard, at all costs, Pakistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

32. I would like to congratulate the nation on the achievements of our scientists and engineers. They have made it possible for the people of Pakistan to enter the next century, with confidence in themselves and faith in their destiny.